



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health
National Cancer Institute**Memorandum**

Date March 29, 1996

From Chief, Radiation Effects Branch, DCB

Subject Items of Interest in Minsk Following Your Departure on March 20, 1996

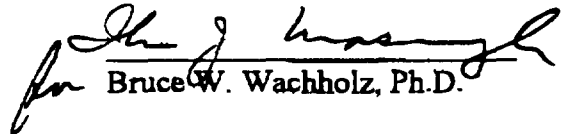
To Elaine Gallin, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Office of International Health, DOE

The following occurred following the signing of the "Funding Arrangement" between you and Dr. Nikolay Krisenko, Deputy Minister of Health on March 20 and may be of interest:

- Dr. Mohandas Bhat, Dr. Patricia Holahan and I met briefly with Tammy Fitzgerald, Second Secretary, U.S. Embassy in Minsk on March 21. She was briefed on the funding arrangement, asked about procedures to transfer monies and the conditions and timing of same. She also asked if the ambassador should send the letter requesting governmental support for our project to the prime minister as he had previously intended to do, but which was not sent following the lack of agreement during the discussions in January. I indicated that I would inquire of Dr. Krisenko if it would still be helpful for the ambassador to send the letter.
- It was noon on Friday, March 22, before I could find and speak to Dr. Krisenko; he asked that the ambassador send the letter referred to above.
- Upon contacting the embassy regarding the ambassador's letter, I learned that Ms. Fitzgerald and Ambassador Yalowitz would be available for a brief period to time later that day. Unfortunately, Dr. Bhat had already departed Minsk and Dr. Holahan could not be located. Dr. David Becker and Dr. Ihor Masnyk were the only participants of the thyroid study that could be located and I invited them to join me.
- The meeting with the Ambassador and Ms. Fitzgerald resulted in the following:
 1. The Ambassador expressed regret and disappointment that he had not been informed in advance of the signing of the "funding arrangement." Because of limited opportunities to publicize U.S. activities and interests pertaining to the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident, the Ambassador suggested that his presence, together with Belarus government officials, TV cameras and the press, could have provided an unusual opportunity to enhance the U.S. image regarding concern for people, particularly children, affected by the accident.

2. In fairness, I indicated that we were not sure the document would be signed until Wednesday morning.
3. At a minimum, he requested Ms. Fitzgerald to prepare a press release and asked that I assist her in doing so. On March 24 she discussed with me by telephone the general content of a press release. We discussed several factual matters and I suggested that the embassy and the Ministry of Health jointly issue the press release. I do not know the final wording of the text or if it was issued.
4. We suggested to the Ambassador that another opportunity for publicity and TV cameras might be at the time cohort children begin to be examined at the dispensary. Although a possibility, the Ambassador noted that this event will occur after April 26 and, therefore, might be too late to be associated with the 10th anniversary.
5. The Ambassador agreed to send a letter to the prime minister soliciting his support of our project as a national project. The original letter, in which DOE had concurred, required a few minor changes to reflect recent events; I do not have a copy of the final wording, however.

I hope that the above is helpful to you.


for Bruce W. Wachholz, Ph.D.

cc: F. Austin
J. Taylor
C. Kessler
J. Wechselberger
S. Yaniv
P. Holahan
M. Bhat